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MISSING ONP HIKERS FOUND IN GOOD CONDITION

A two-person search team along the Duckabush Trail found missing hikers Neil Twilla, 41, of Silverdale and Jeff Mersmann, 38, of Bremerton at about 1:30 p.m. this afternoon, according to Olympic National Park sources.

Both men appear to be in good condition though cold, hungry and tired, park officials said.

Additional searchers are hiking to the men's location with extra food and supplies and will accompany Twilla and Mersmann on the remaining six-mile hike out to the Duckabush Trailhead.

"We're overjoyed to have found these two people safe and sound," said park superintendent Bill Laitner. "We are very grateful for the assistance and generosity of so many citizens and volunteers."

About 50 searchers and support staff participated in the search today, including Olympic National Park staff, Mount Rainier National Park employees, crew members from the Washington Conservation Corps, volunteers from Olympic Mountain Rescue, three volunteer search dog teams and a contracted helicopter.

Twilla and Mersmann were reported overdue on Tuesday afternoon after they failed to return home from a planned overnight hike to Upper Lena Lake; they were expected home by Sunday evening and at work on Monday.

At an elevation of 4,600 feet above sea level, Upper Lena Lake is located northwest of the town of Eldon. The lake is 7.3 miles from the trailhead.

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